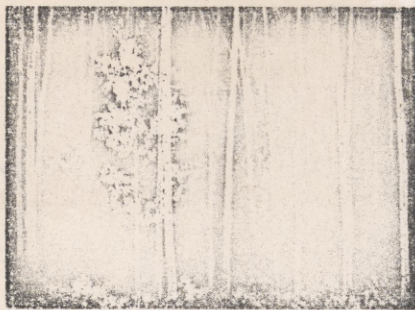




by Ansel Adams in *This Is the American Earth*

SIERRA CLUB

Mills Tower, San Francisco 94104

January 6, 1972

415

642-6000

Dr. Theodore Niehaus
1455 Spruce
Berkeley, California 94709

Dear Dr. Niehaus:

Thank you for the information concerning rare species of plants in the Mineral King area.

As you may know, our current law suit on Mineral King will be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court almost any time.

I have forwarded copies of your letter to Club members interested in that area in the hope that your data will be of some use in their efforts.

Thank you again for your interest in writing.

Most sincerely,

Eugene V. Coan
Assistant to the Executive Director

EVC:elf

cc: Leland Selna
Albert Hill
Mrs. Richard Koch ✓
Joe Fontaine
Larry Moss

2023.009.094a

RECEIVED JAN 4 1972

Mr. Michael McClosky
Sierra Club
1050 Mills Tower
San Francisco, Ca 94104

December 30, 1971

Gene C.
Please reply

Dear Mr. McCloskey,

Re: Rare Plants in Mineral King.

I do not if the following information has been considered to date in the fight for Mineral King. I am working along with others in a Rare and endangered Plant list of California. The list had not been made public yet but the following two species are in the Mineral King area and may well help stop development via the endangered species act and similar legislation.

#1. Phacelia orogenes Brand. A local species with the Type Locality (The place first discovered and legal check place to base all identifications of ~~THIS~~ species ~~are~~) The following are the three collections on hand in the U.C. Herbarium and represent the actual label information. The area is the Mineral King basin I would guess in all cases, Not having been to these localities.

Tulare County

Eagle Lake Trail, 8600 ft. Type Locality

Howell 27789

1951

Tulare County

Meadow west face of black rock pass, 10,000 ft

Ferris and Lorraine 10923

1943

Mineral King

Howell 17108

1942

#2. The second species is Brodiaea insignis (Jepson) Niehaus which was rediscovered in 1967 after being unknown for nearly 70 years. It was rediscovered in a new locality at Three Rivers along the south fork canyon road at three stations. During 1971 while in the area I found that 2 of the above stations had become extinct.

While looking at Samuel Pusateri's Sequoia National Park Wildflower book a photograph he labeled B. coronaria I find is actually B. insignis. I ask Mr. Pusateri as to where he had photographed it. He replied (in a conversation in 1967) along the Mineral King Road. Until recently I have not pursued it further. When I thought it might be useful to stop Mineral King and save a rare species I have written to Mr. Pusateri to obtain the exact locality. I will pass it on when he replies. The one location on the south fork road and possible the one on the Mineral King are the only known locations of this species. The south fork location is a very small plot of 1/4 acre or less. Thus the two locations represent a rare species.

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There is one other dried herbarium collection of B. insignis ^{IT} was collected on the Tule River to the south of Mineral King. I have checked the area at the proper time and place and did not find it. The locality is now heavily watered pasture which causes extinction for Brodiaea species.

The genus Brodiaea has been studied ^{THOROUGHLY} ~~thoroughly~~ by myself during the last 15 years and a new monograph will be available from the Univ. Calif. Publ. in Botany some time in January. I do not know the references concerning Phacelia orogenes, but Dr. Lincoln Constance at Dept. of Botany U.C. Berkeley is the world's authority on the genus Phacelia.

The Brodiaea insignis locality on the Mineral King road must not be disturbed by road building or this population, one of the two known to exist will be wiped out. The other population on the south fork road is very small and thus both sites are of critical importance to survival of the species. Transplanting to a new site is a highly questionable solution and from my experience of growing all of the species of Brodiaea. I would say preservation of the species by this means is impossible.

In the case of Phacelia orogenes I do not know its growing requirements but any land clearing for ski runs, roads, etc would certainly upset ecological balances.

A very careful survey of exactly where these species grow must be made during their flowering period. Thus if present actions to stop Mineral King development? fail and work starts. An injunction of some sort would be needed until the areas could be checked during the summer of 1972.

Sincerely,

Theodore Niehaus
Dr. Theodore Niehaus, Botanist
1455 Spruce
Berkeley, Calif. 94709

Phyllis Reid
415-843-6407

*herbarium
septentium
2465*

870-7263
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